



Dear ##[Name | First]##,

It may seem like spring is just beginning to show itself, but the farming season has already started in earnest with sowing seeds and planting out cold-hardy veggies. This is an exciting time in local food, and the perfect moment to get curious about what farm products are available in your community.

In this issue, we explore tools for finding local food across Kentucky, showcase a seasonal recipe for asparagus, and learn ideal plant pairings to maximize your garden space.

The OAK team is excited to kick off another growing season and can't wait to share the joy of seasonal, local eating with you this year!

Wishing you a colorful spring season,  
The OAK team.

---

## Local Eating Spotlight...

### How to Find More Kentucky-Grown Foods this Season

The average food item in the United States travels 1,500 miles from producer to plate. Shrinking this distance is an easy and delicious way to live more sustainably. Eating local can look like frequenting the farmers market, becoming a member of a farm's CSA (community supported agriculture) program, starting a garden, or simply getting curious about what agricultural products are readily available in your community!

**WE KNOW  
ORGANIC FARMS CAN  
CHANGE YOUR LIFE.  
NOW IT'S EASY TO  
FIND A FARM AND  
CHOOSE ORGANIC IN  
KENTUCKY.**

**OAK-KY.ORG/FIND-A-FARM**



Here are some more Kentucky-focused resources to help you discover great-tasting local food across the state and learn more about seasonal

A big part of eating seasonally is learning how to use what's available each season to enjoy farm-fresh ingredients at their best! The [Kentucky Farm Share Coalition's vegetable guide](#) showcases common

offering a variety of products. The [OAK Find-a-Farm Directory](#) helps you locate produce from farms in your area. You can search by zip code, organic certification or CSA and read farm profiles to learn

practices. Curious about what's available when in Kentucky? Check out the [Kentucky Farm Share Coalition's Eating with the Seasons Postcard](#) to know when

your favorite produce will be available at peak ripeness. This helpful tool gives an at-a-glance view of a year of local produce and makes it easy to plan your seasonal eating!



[Explore More Resources](#)

## Seasonal Recipes...

### Lemon Asparagus Ribbon Salad



Asparagus heralds the arrival of the growing season. It is a perennial vegetable only available for a few short weeks each April, so make sure to enjoy it while you can! This asparagus ribbon salad offers a fun new take on a beloved spring vegetable. It can be easily made with ingredients from the farmers market and a few pantry staples. It can also be whipped up quickly for a tasty weeknight side dish.

[View Recipe Handout](#)

## In the Garden...

### Three Plant Pairs to Maximize Garden Space

When garden space is limited, choosing what to dedicate space to can be daunting. Interplanting, the practice of growing different crops alongside each other, is an essential tool for gardeners to get the most out of their space.

In addition to boosting garden productivity, interplanting helps promote biodiversity and soil fertility. Choose plant combinations with complementary fertility and space needs to reap the full benefits of intercropping. Keep reading to learn more about three duos to try out in your garden this spring.



#### Tomato and Basil

- Tomatoes and basil go together in both the kitchen and the garden. They both love the heat of summer but have different nutrition and space preferences, making them a great

- interplanting pair.
- Interplanting tomato beds with basil helps to increase biodiversity and yield without introducing competition to the tomatoes.
- Transplant basil one foot away from tomatoes, or simply sow 4-5 basil seeds around each tomato plant this May.



#### Lettuce and Corn

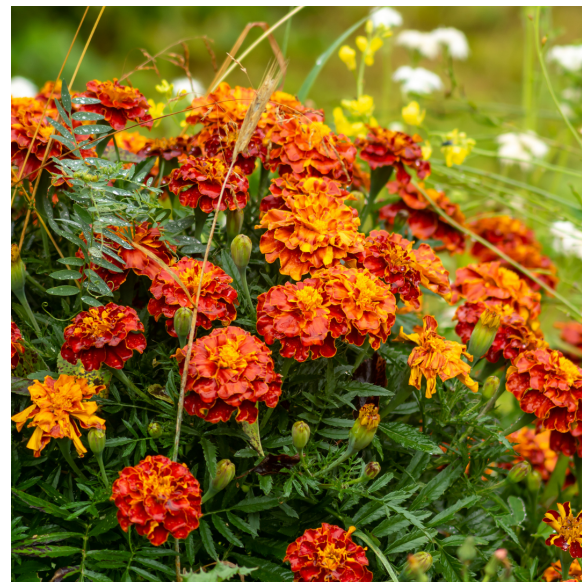
- This interplanting strategy is all about timing, using two plants with different days to maturity and climate preferences to double your harvest.
- Lettuce prefers cool temperatures, and planting with corn can provide some shade as it grows.
- After the danger of frost has passed in May, plant corn directly in between the rows of lettuce (planted a few weeks before the last frost in April). Make sure to harvest the lettuce when it's ready, around 50-60 days after the seed is started.

#### Marigolds and Cucumbers

- Interplanting can mean gardeners don't have to compromise between ornamentals and vegetables.
- Planting a row of marigolds alongside cucumbers brings some color to the garden and keeps more of the soil covered.
- As an additional benefit, many beneficial pollinators will be attracted to the marigold's bright blooms. Interplanting them with vegetables that are particularly susceptible to pests may provide another layer of protection.

For more info about interplanting and specific crop suggestions check out these resources:

- [Cool Season Planting Chart for Companion, Interplanting & Square Foot Gardening](#)
- [Companion Planting in the Vegetable Garden](#)
- [Companion Planting Chart and Guide for Vegetable Gardens](#)



---

## Upcoming Events & Resources

## CSA Direct Marketing Summit is on April 6-8, 2024!

Are you a CSA grower, producer, agriculture educator or professional? Join us for the 4th annual Direct Marketing Summit this spring. This year will have a CSA theme and be co-hosted by Kentucky Horticulture Council, Center for Crop Diversification, OAK and Kentucky Farm Share Coalition.

[Learn More](#)



## Subscribe to the OAK Field Notes!

OAK Field Notes is a monthly farmer newsletter from OAK that offers the latest information on organic research, grant opportunities, regional workshops, farmer highlights, and other relevant information for Kentucky growers of all sizes.

[Sign Up Here](#)

## Get more seasonal tips from OAK on Sustainability Now!

Give this Sustainability Now! episode a listen (program of [Forward Radio](#)) to hear host, Justin Mog, talk with Katie Harvey, OAK's CSA Marketing and Outreach Program Manager about the why's and how's of adding more fresh, local, seasonal foods to your plate this spring. They highlight the many possibilities from foraging, to growing your own, to farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm subscriptions!

[Listen Here](#)



Find more resources  
[@kyfarmshare:](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

**Donate to OAK. Your tax-deductible gift helps germinate, cultivate, and activate Kentucky's resilient food and farming network.**

[Donate](#)



**Join us! The organic farming network in Kentucky is growing. Together we are creating a more regenerative, organic food system.**

[Become an OAK Member](#)

### **Stay in touch:**

Organic Association of Kentucky  
PO Box 22244, Lexington, KY 40522  
e: [info@oak-ky.org](mailto:info@oak-ky.org) | p: 1.502.219.7378